



PEACEFUL REST FOR THE RESTLESS

There is nothing worse than a sleepless night, tossing and turning, hiding under the covers as the rising sun appears to start the day. It leaves one struggling throughout the day, snapping at your friends, miserably watching the clock for the day to end, only to find sleep eludes you once again at bedtime. You find yourself at the mercy of your pillow for another night until the brightly lit clock shouts the time of the next screeching alarm. Why does sleep elude you? More importantly, how can you bring it back?



Sleep is the body's way of resetting the mind and body. For children, it aides in growth and development. In adults, it aides in healing. When we are stressed, the body has difficulty sleeping. According to a Consumer Reports survey (2015), 68% of Americans reported experiencing difficulty sleeping at least once a week. Of those, 27% struggled to fall or to stay asleep on most nights.

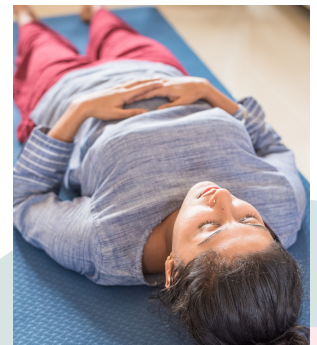
Mindful Sleeping Habits

Deep, Slow Breathing Exercises

Deep breathing is one of the easiest and best mindfulness exercises to get to sleep quickly. The idea is to become aware of your breathing. Relax your body. Focus on breathing in through your nose for four seconds. Then pause for two seconds and relax. Now exhale through your mouth for six seconds. Repeat.

Focus On Your Body

It is important for you to know the state of your mind and body. As you are lying down, begin at your feet. Focus only on the feeling of each foot. Imagine telling each foot to relax and be still. Note the feeling of your feet being relaxed. Then move to your ankles. Focus only on the feeling of each ankle. Imagine telling each ankle to relax and be still. Note the feeling of your ankles being relaxed. Move to each part of your body. Use your breathing techniques as you move through your body. Before you know it, you will be fast asleep.



Mindful Music Melodies

Listening to calming music can bring your mind and body to a state of rest and relaxation. Try sounds and harmonies that soothe your spirit. You can download free apps on your mobile device that can play softly in the background as you move into state of deep sleep. Set a timer for thirty minutes before bed time.



Aromatherapy

Aromatherapy is the use of smell through essential oils to improve a person's health and well-being. Essential oils can help bring peace, focus, comfort and even improve sleep. One method of using aromatherapy through essential oils is a pillow spray. A pillow spray is a spray of natural essential oils which is then sprayed on a pillow to help with relaxation and sleep. Certain oils are used for their ability to promote relaxation such as lavender, vanilla, chamomile, etc.



Mindful Sleep Habit Benefits

Healthy Benefits of Mindful Sleep Behaviors

We established that sleep is essential to a healthy mind and body. By practicing mindful sleep habits, sleep will come easier for those that struggle with the stress of the day and can't seem to put their mind at rest. By implementing at least one of the above actions into place, the quality of your sleep will improve. You will see an improvement in the quality of your daily life. Here are just a few benefits mindful sleep habits can bring you:

- Reduces stress, anxiety and depression
- Increases healthy sleep patterns
- Strengthens immunity
- Increases physical health such as lower blood pressure
- Helps you maintain healthier weight
- Promotes positive outlook and decision making



Resources

Fargo, S. 10 Mindfulness Exercises for Sleep. <https://mindfulness Exercises.com/10-mindfulness-exercises-for-sleep/>

Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. (2023, January 17). Healthy Living: Get Enough Sleep. <https://health.gov/myhealthfinder/healthy-living/mental-health-and-relationships/get-enough-sleep>

Staff, M. (2022, November 15). The Ultimate Guide to mindfulness for sleep. Mindful. <https://www.mindful.org/the-ultimate-guide-to-mindfulness-for-sleep/>

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